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ABSTRACT

This module is intended to provide resources to persons interested in developing a prevocational curriculum for handicapped students. It provides nine definitions; discusses the timing, goals, and curriculum for prevocational education; identifies the implications of the Carl Perkins Act for prevocational training in Missouri; and lists the steps in performing a task analysis. A 4-item bibliography, a listing of 20 curriculum materials, and a listing of 11 sources of student materials are included. (CML)

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TITLE PREVOCATIONAL TRAINING

University of Missouri-Columbia
401 E. Stewart Road
Columbia, MO 65211
(800) 392-0533 in Missouri only
(314) 882-2733

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TO THE EDUCATIONAL RESOURCES INFORMATION CENTER (ERIC)."

ABSTRACT: Basic questions regarding prevocational education are answered as they pertain to vocational special needs students. Suggestions and resources are given for help in the development of prevocational curricula.

CE 055 374

PREVOCATIONAL TRAINING

Overview

Prevocational training is designed to prepare special needs students for the world of work and adult life. The intent of this packet is to provide resources to persons interested in developing a prevocational curriculum for handicapped students.

Definitions/Terminology

Career Education: Totality of experiences through which one learns about and prepares to engage in work as part of his or her way of living.

Computerized Vocational Objectives: Skills/Objectives which are appropriate for the IEP in the vocational area, and are in the computer with the other IEP objectives.

Employability Skills: Skills other than technical skills which employers consider most desirable. These skills are often incorporated with prevocational curricula. (see Table I)

Entry Level Skills: Skills identified by vocational and special educators which will enhance a handicapped student's chance for success in vocational training programs.

Generalizable Skills: Basic to, necessary for success in, and transferable or common within and/or across secondary vocational training programs and/or jobs.

Hands-on Training: The handicapped student learns by actually performing the task with the physical tools or implements of that trade/profession. This can happen in the classroom or in the workplace.

Life Centered Career Education Competencies: Competencies in three general areas should be addressed, beginning during the elementary years and continuing throughout life. The three general areas are: Daily Living Skills, Personal-Social Skills and Occupational Information and Guidance.

Prevocational: Includes specific preparation in social and personal areas, an evaluation of career characteristics, intensive occupational exploration and academic learning which is social and occupational in orientation and scope. Intra-school and inter-school work experiences can begin during prevocational training at the junior high level.

Skill Transfer: The student can perform the tasks in the classroom and transfer the skill to the workplace.

TABLE I

Element	Employer Ranking	Educator Ranking	Student Ranking	Overall Mean
Work Attitude & Human Relation Skills	1	1	3	1.67
Vocational-Technical Knowledge	2	2	1	1.67
Academic (Basic Skills)	4	3	2	3.00
Communication Skills	3	4	5	4.00
Work Experience	5	5	4	4.67

Source: Vocational Education Trends and Priorities, Department of Elementary and Secondary Education, Division of Career and Adult Education, University of Missouri-Columbia Research Team, November, 1984.

Frequently Asked Questions

Q. WHAT IS PREVOCATIONAL EDUCATION?

A. Prevocational education can be thought of in at least two different ways. For those handicapped students who can benefit from vocational education at the secondary level prevocational education should consist of generalizable skills, employability skills and the entry level skills necessary for their chosen vocational area. However, for students who will not participate in vocational training or post secondary education, the prevocational curriculum is a vital educational component. It can include employability skills, competencies in daily living skills and personal/social skills, awareness of occupations, basic skills, occupational exploration, and hands-on training and work experience.

Q. WHEN SHOULD PREVOCATIONAL EDUCATION BEGIN?

A. In the most general sense, prevocational education should begin in the early elementary grades using career education concepts. At the junior high level, the emphasis on occupational exploration and employability skills should be evident. At the senior high level, students should be ready to enter vocational education training or to receive work experience or hands-on training in their interest area. This "hands-on" training would optimally be given in the community in order to minimize the problems of "skill transfer" from the school to the place of employment/training.

Q. WHAT ARE THE GOALS OF PREVOCATIONAL EDUCATION?

A. Primarily, prevocational education should prepare students for vocational and life experiences. For some students this would mean teaching the skills necessary for entry into a vocational program. For others, the goal is to develop skills which will enable the student to better understand occupations, occupational choices, and skills necessary for adult independent living.

The outcomes of a prevocational curriculum should develop the student's ability to:

1. Acquire knowledge about varied occupational areas.
2. Explore vocational interests.
3. Develop good attendance.
4. Secure career information/specifics of jobs.
5. Acquire basic occupational skill and knowledge.
6. Follow directions.
7. Establish a career goal/occupational choice.
8. Develop safe work habits.
9. Develop appropriate work attitudes.
10. Develop appropriate work behaviors.
11. Meet basic entry level skills of preparation program.
12. Acquire general physical/manual skills.
13. Develop personal/social skills.
14. Acquire academic skills (reading and math).
15. Become familiar with tools and equipment.
16. Be able to work independently.
17. Acquire vocabulary related to occupational area.
18. Develop independent living skills.

These areas are not all-inclusive and should be continued at the senior high, career preparation level.

Q. WHAT SHOULD A PREVOCATIONAL CURRICULUM INCLUDE?

A. - activities for career exploration (field trips, career days, job shadowing, exploring job clusters, etc.)

- basic skills instruction (math, reading, communication) tied as closely as possible to occupations

- personal/social skills instruction (developing self-confidence, respect for others, responding to supervisor and co-workers, etc.)

- daily living skills instruction (budgeting, meal planning, mobility, personal health, use of prosthetic/assistive devices, etc.)

- pre-requisite skills for vocational training, if appropriate.

- any specific skills an individual student may need or want to master, in order to prepare for independent living.

Q. WHAT IMPLICATIONS DOES THE CARL PERKINS ACT HAVE REGARDING PREVOCATIONAL TRAINING?

A. According to the 1986-88 Missouri State Plan for Vocational Education:

- Information will be provided no later than the beginning of the ninth-grade year to handicapped students and their parents concerning the opportunities available in vocational education together with the eligibility requirements for enrollment in vocational education programs.

- The interests, abilities, and special needs of each handicapped student will be assessed with respect to successfully completing a vocational education program. The assessment process will be designed to determine the vocational potential by observing and measuring the interests, abilities, and special needs, and using these results to assist in formulating a realistic vocational plan.

- Special services, which may include adaptation of curriculum, instruction, equipment, and facilities, et cetera, designed to meet the needs identified through the student asessment process will be provided. Emphasis will be placed on mainstreaming special needs students in regular vocational programs, using such strategies as resource personnel, supplemental staff, resource materials, basic skills instruction, equipment, et-cetera.

- Guidance, counseling, and career development activities will be conducted by professionally trained counselors who are associated with the provision of the special services.

- The transition from school to employment and career opportunities will be facilitated through guidance and counseling services. The activities include the following: preemployment skills training, placement services for entry into the labor market, and guidance services to facilitate the transition to further training.

The Carl Perkins Act does not fully fund prevocational programs, but can help counselors and teachers provide information, assessment and career guidance to those students enrolled in a vocational education programs.

Q. WHAT IS THE PARENT'S ROLE IN PREVOCATIONAL TRAINING?

A. Parents can take a large role in prevocational training by agreeing to teach certain skills at home, such as doing laundry, cleaning, making beds, grooming, shopping and visits to different businesses to see how workers behave and what they do. The extent of the role parents take depends upon the parents' willingness to try and the supportiveness of the teacher in providing ideas, materials and encouragement.

Q. I WORK WITH LOWER-FUNCTIONING STUDENTS AND NEED A WAY TO HELP THEM LEARN VARIOUS JOBS.

A. Task analysis is a systematic procedure for determining what a worker does to perform a job. The process involves observation of the worker's job and interviews with the workers and supervisors. While much information about a job is obtained through the analysis, the most important aspect is the identification of the specific tasks performed. Task analysis involves breaking tasks down into specific components in order to determine exactly what activities are required to perform the task.

Areas where task analysis is useful include identifying behaviors and performance levels, monitoring student progress, teaching new skills, and modifying jobs. For example, in order to know if a student is on-task or off-task, it is necessary to understand exactly what she is supposed to be doing. Also, in teaching new skills or behaviors, it is often desirable to instruct the student in each component of a task individually. Once mastery is achieved, the next component can be taught. After all components have been mastered, they can be chained together and the task performed to criterion. For example, the task of sawing boards to specification could include: (1) measurement using a yardstick, (2) making the line to be cut using a square, (3) placing the board in a vise, and (4) cutting the board with a cross-cut saw.

STEPS IN PERFORMING TASK ANALYSIS

Bernstein et al. (1981) discuss five steps in performing a task analysis (pp. 167-168):

1. Watch a master perform the task;
2. Perform it yourself;
3. Work backward through the task;
4. Brainstorm; and
5. Break down complex goals.

The first step is to observe an experienced person who performs the task well. In sequential order and in behavioral terms each step of the task should be recorded. Then the task analyst should perform the task. It is helpful to have another staff person who is unfamiliar with the task perform it as well. This will assure that no step has been omitted. In addition it will assure that the written description of each step is clear and understandable. Further it is helpful to work backward in the task. That is, one does the last step first, the next to last step second, and so on. This also helps to assure that no step has been omitted and the sequence is correct.

Some tasks are performed in chronological order and others have a functional sequence. Most assembly type tasks are performed in chronological order. This means that there is a specific sequence that must be followed in order to complete the task correctly. Functional order tasks do not require this. An example are the tasks involved in cleaning a room. One person might begin by emptying the ashtrays while another person might do this last. While the sequence is of little importance with some tasks, there is some merit in performing one step prior to another. For example, one would not mop the floor prior to sweeping it. Bernstein et al. (1981) suggest that the staff get together, write down all sub-tasks, and then arrange them in a logical order. Sometimes this identification is not for the sole purpose of sequencing sub-tasks in a logical order but rather for determining when the task is complete. Moyer and Dardig (1978) suggest this method as most effective when the behavioral goal is in the affective domain. The steps are as follows:

a. Write the goal;
b. List observable behaviors that the student would exhibit when the goal is attained;
c. Confirm that the list of behaviors is comprehensive to attain the goal;
d. Discard unnecessary behaviors and clarify those remaining; and
e. Describe the behavior frequency and the performance standard for each goal.

Let's suppose the general goal is to assist the student to develop interpersonal skills. More specifically, we are concerned with our student's conversations with other students during break periods. Our goal would be stated:

a. Will converse with other students during each break period.

Two observable behaviors are talking and attending. The attending behavior could be defined operationally by head posture and eye contact. We are also concerned with the frequency of initiating conversation. Our criteria for these behaviors could be as follows:

1. Initiates conversation at least once during each break period.
2. Faces other student 75% of time.
3. Makes eye contact 25% of time.

By observing the student at break periods we could test these behaviors to see if we are on target. If we conclude we are, then we can develop the strategies for assisting the student to reach the goal.

In summary, task analysis has application for identifying behavioral and performance problems, monitoring student behavior and performance, modifying jobs or tasks, and for teaching new skills and/or behaviors. It not only provides you with information about what should be taught (curriculum content), but also data about how it should be taught. The process for conducting a task analysis is relatively simple. However, it does require the ability to observe and record information in behavioral terms. (Pruitt, 1983)

Bibliography

Bernstein, G., Ziarnik, J., Rudrud, E. & Czajkowski, L. (1981). Behavioral habilitation through proactive programming. Baltimore, MD: Paul H. Brooks.

Missouri Department of Elementary and Secondary Education. (1986). 1986-88 Missouri state plan for vocational education. Department of Elementary and Secondary Education, Division of Vocational and Adult Education.

Pruitt, W. A. (1983). Work adjustment. Menomonie, WI: Walt Pruitt Associates.

University of Missouri-Columbia Research Team. (1984). Vocational education trends and priorities. Department of Elementary and Secondary Education, Division of Career and Adult Education.

APPENDIX A

Curriculum Materials

This list is not all inclusive but is intended to illustrate the variety of materials available.

A Meaningful Life and Emerging Career: A Career Education Guide, Early Childhood through Grade 12, Milwaukee Public Schools, Division of Exceptional Education and Supportive Services, 5225 West Vliet Street, Milwaukee, WI 53208

A Slice of Life: Fremont Union High School District, Mafex, Inc., 90 Cherry Street, Box 519, Johnston, PA 15907.

Career Education for Behaviorally Disordered Students: Fink & Kokaska, Council for Exceptional Children, 1920 Association Drive, Reston, VA 22091-1589.

Career Education for the Handicapped Child in the Elementary Classroom: Clark, G., Love Publishing Co., Denver, CO 80222.

Career Education Methods and Processes: Developmental Level 7-12, Gysbers & Moore, Instructional Materials Laboratory, 10 London Hall, University of Missouri, Columbia, MO 65211.

1) Career Objective and Activity Handbook, Stella Port, 2) Career Exploration Handbook, Stella Port, 3) Continuum of Major Life Activities, Port: Charlton & Lindstrom, Career Assessment & Placement Center, 9401 S. Painter Avenue, Whitten, CA 90605.

Career Related Instructional Awareness Packets: Webb, S., Capitol Area Career Center, 611 Hagadorn Road, Mason, MI 48854.

Catalog of Vocational Special Needs Resources (available on loan). Areas covered: Career Education, Vocationally Related Materials, Job Seeking/Job Keeping Skills, Functional Academics, Daily Living/Personal-Social Skills, Vocational Education Services, 840 State Road 46 Bypass, Room 110, Indiana University, Bloomington, IN 47405.

Completed Task Analysis for Vocational Skills: Marc Gold & Associates, Inc., P. O. Box 1500, Austin, TX 78763.

Employability Skills for the Special Needs Learner: Wircenski, J., Aspen Publications, 1600 Research Boulevard, Rockville, MD 20850.

Entry Level Skills Instructional Manual: Instructional Materials Laboratory, 10 London Hall, University of Missouri, Columbia, MO 65211.

Experience-Based Career Education for Mildly Mentally Disabled: An Implementation Guide: Iowa Central Community College, 330 Avenue M, Ft. Dodge, IA 50501.

Getting Started: Career Education Activities for Exceptional Students K-9, Jill S. Lamkin: Council for Exceptional Children, 1920 Association Drive, Reston, VA 22091-1589.

Identification of Generalizable Skills in Secondary Vocational Programs: Executive Summary, Greenan, J.: ED 235-309, ERIC Document Service, P. O. Box 190, Arlington, VA 22210.

Life Centered Career Education: A Competency-Based Approach, Brolin, D. E.: Council for Exceptional Children, 1920 Association Drive, Reston, VA 22091-1589.

Multi-Media Materials Catalog: Child Service Demonstration Center, Oklahoma Secondary Learning Disabilities Project, 101 W. Broadway, Cushing, OK 74023

Occupational Orientation Curriculum Gunderson: Instructional Materials Laboratory, 10 London Hall, University of Missouri, Columbia, MO 65211.

Prevocational Education: A Resource Manual, Neubert & Taymans (can be used for In-service training of teachers): Vocational Curriculum Center, University of Maryland, J. M. Patterson Building, College Park, MD 20742.

Social Studies: Focus on You and Your World: Career Alternatives Program, Special School District of St. Louis County, 12110 Clayton Road, St. Louis, MO 63131.

Training for Life: A Practical Guide to Career and Life Planning, Hecklinger & Curtin: Kendall/Hunt Publishing Co., 2460 Kerper Boulevard, P. O. Box 539, Dubuque, IA 52001.

APPENDIX B

Catalogs

These catalogs could be reviewed
for student-use materials.

Career Aids, Inc.
8950 Lurline Avenue
Department S6
Chatsworth, CA 91311

Delmar Publishers
50 Wolf Road
Albany, NY 12205

Ebsco Curriculum Materials
Division of Ebsco Industries, Inc.
P. O. Box 11542
Birmingham, AL 35202

Educational Design, Inc.
47 W. 13th Street
New York, NY 10011

Franke Richards Publishing Co., Inc.
P. O. Box 66
Phoenix, New York 13135

Hopewell Books, Inc.
1670 Sturbridge Drive
RD #1
Sewickley, PA 15143

Janus Book Publishers
2501 Industrial Parkway West
Department H135T
Hayward, CA 94545

Opportunities for Learning, Inc.,
8950 Lurline Avenue
Department GR8
Chatsworth, CA 91311

PRO-ED
5341 Industrial Oaks Blvd.
Austin, TX 78735

Publishers Test Service
2500 Garden Road
Monterey, CA 93940-5380

Sunburst
Room SB6
39 Washington Avenue
Pleasantville, NY 10570-9971

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